

Remarks

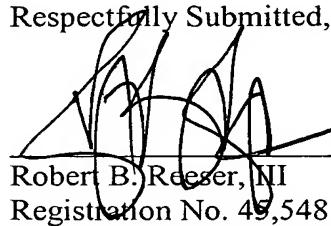
The Office Action mailed April 18, 2006 has been carefully reviewed and the foregoing amendment has been made in consequence thereof.

Claims 1-16 are now pending in this application. Claims 1-16 are subject to an election/restriction requirement. Reconsideration of the restriction requirement imposed under 35 U.S.C. § 121 is respectfully requested.

A restriction to either Group I, consisting of claims 1-12 drawn to a washing machine, classified in Class 68, subclass 12.21, or Group II, consisting of claims 13-16, drawn to a method of filling a washing machine, classified in class 8, subclass 158, was imposed. In response, Applicant confirms the election with traverse to prosecute the invention of Group I, claims 1-12.

The requirement for election is traversed because the inventions set out by the claims in Groups I and II are clearly related. Applicant submits that a thorough search and examination of either Group would be relevant to the examination of the other Group and would not be a serious burden on the Examiner. Additionally, requirements for election are not mandatory under 35 U.S.C. 121. Accordingly, reconsideration of the election requirement is requested.

Respectfully Submitted,


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